26 February 2016 - Early statistics for winter 2015/16 show that the season has been wet and warm, and record-breaking for some

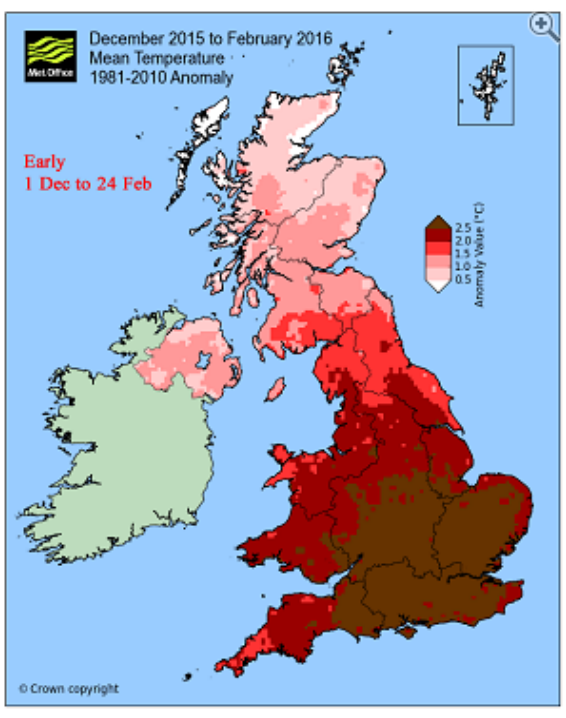
It's shaping up to be the second wettest winter for the UK and the warmest on record for England and Wales in records going back to 1910.

February marks the last month of meteorological winter and early provisional stats for the month reveal fairly average conditions. However, the record-breaking mild and wet weather of December has had a big influence on winter 2015/16 as a whole.

In terms of temperature, the figures for winter are well above average everywhere.

For the UK, the mean temperature from 1 December to 24th February is 5.6C, a fair way above the long term average of 3.7C.

The warmth is most notable in the south of the UK with mean temperatures across much of England and Wales around 2C above average. Early estimates suggest that for the UK, this winter is likely to be around the third warmest since records began in 1910 (behind 1989 and 2007, 5.8C and 5.6C respectively). For England and Wales, however, it's looking likely that it will be the warmest winter on record, beating the previous records from 2007 and 1989.



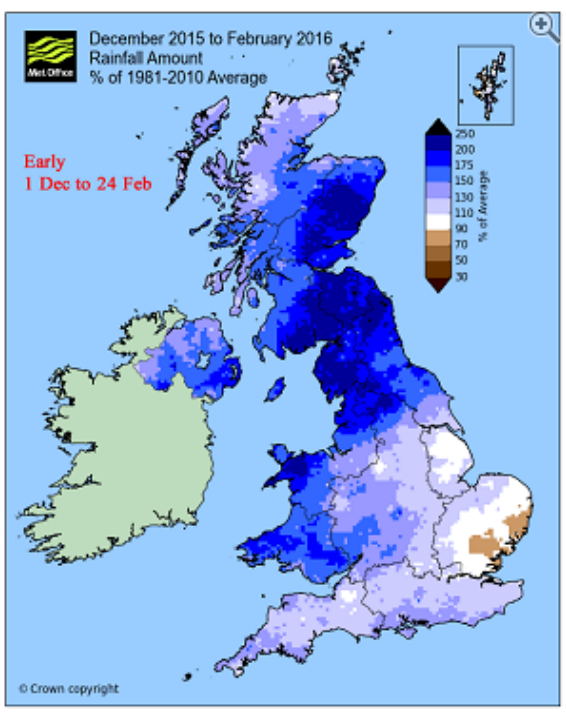
1 Dec 2015 - 24 February 2016 mean temperature anomaly

Looking at the Central England Temperature (CET), the longest temperature record in the world, this winter's figure of 7.0C currently makes it the warmest in the series (back to 1659), beating the previous record of 6.8C in 1868-69.

Following the extreme rainfall across northern and western parts of the UK in December and early January, this has been a wet winter across a large part of the UK. The early figures show rainfall total for the UK of 515mm which is well above the long term winter average of 330.4mm. This makes winter 2015/16 the second wettest on record behind 2013/14 (545mm). These are the only two years with rainfall totals exceeding 500mm, the next wettest is 1995 (485mm).

The only places where above average rainfall wasn't recorded were parts of East Anglia and eastern England. As can be seen below there are some large contrasts across the country, with the wettest areas in a swathe from Wales to eastern Scotland where many areas saw double the amount of rainfall normally recorded in winter.

It is already the wettest winter on record for Wales with 757mm (beating 2013/2014, 726mm) and also in Scotland with 756mm (beating 2013/2014, 744mm) while the rainfall for this winter in Northern Ireland currently equals the previous record from 1994 (489mm).



1 Dec 2015 - 24 February 2016 rainfall anomaly

The long-running England and Wales precipitation series (EWP) from 1 December to 24 February is 367mm. This is presently tenth in the series (with data back to 1766), the lower ranking demonstrating the significant effect that the large rainfall totals across Wales, north England and Scotland have on the UK statistics.

For sunshine, although February saw near-average amounts, winter as a whole was rather dull with below average sunshine in most areas as clear spells between rain-bearing clouds were limited.

Early	Mean temperature (deg C)		Sunshine (hours)		Rainfall (mm)	
winter 2015/16	Actual	Anomaly (81-10)	Actual	Anomaly (81-10) %	Actual	Anomaly (81-10) %
UK	5.6	1.8	137	87	515	156
England	6.6	2.4	162	92	333	144
Wales	6.4	2.2	127	79	757	174
Scotland	3.7	1.0	101	78	756	161
Northern Ireland	5.4	1.1	121	82	489	156

Looking at February, up until the 24, the UK as a whole saw slightly above average rainfall (100mm compared to the February average of 89mm) and mean temperatures were 0.5C above what we'd expect at this time of year at 4.2C. However, there were some contrasts across the home nations, the recent spell of cold weather has led to the mean temperature across Scotland for February coming out a little below average at 2.5C compared to 2.7C.

Early	Mean temperature (deg C)		Sunshine (hours)		Rainfall (mm)	
1-24 Feb 2016	Actual	Anomaly (81-10) %	Actual	Anomaly (81-10)	Actual	Anomaly (81-10) %
UK	4.2	0.5	69	99	100	112
England	5.1	1.0	78	105	67	110
Wales	4.8	0.8	65	92	134	120
Scotland	2.5	-0.2	67	90	147	113
Northern Ireland	4.2	-0.1	59	88	90	107

Last updated: 26 February 2016